☐ Drafts
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⊘ Pending
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🔍 L1: (54) ((point or credit or incentive) adj5 (management or service or accumulative or accumula
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⊘ UDC
⊘ Queue
⊘ Trash

((point or credit or incentive)
adj5 (management or service or
accumulative or accumulation or
monitor or monitoring) adj15 (system
or service or program)) and
((virtual or online or computer or
on-line) adj15 (shop or vendor or
seller or seller))

#	Document ID	Issue Date	Pages	Title	Current US	Current XRef Restriral	S	C	Inventor
149	US 6009538 A	19991228		System and method of reporting a status of	714/25	705/16; 705/20;	R	L	Goodwin, III, John C. et al.
150	US 5937391 A	19990810	25	Point-service system in online shopping mall	705/14	705/26; 705/27	R	L	Ikeda, Sekio et al.
151	US 5893128 A	19990406	33	Distributed work flow management	715/511		R	L	Nauckhoff, Sven
152	US 5878369 A	19990302	50	Golf course yardage and information system	701/215	340/990; 342/357.08	R	L	Rudow, Richard W. et al.
153	US 5832484 A	19981103	52	Database system with methods for parallel lock management	707/8	707/9; 718/103;	R	L	Sankaran, Mohan et al.
154	US 5732400 A	19980324	27	System and method for a risk-based purchase of goods	705/26	705/1; 705/38	R	L	Mandler, Maria M. et al.
155	US 5689431 A	19971118	51	Golf course yardage and information system	701/213	340/990; 340/995.28;	R	L	Rudow, Richard W. et al.
156	US 5659350 A	19970819	47	Operations center for a television program packaging	725/116	725/118; 725/130;	R	L	Hendricks, John S. et al.
157	US 5590056 A	19961231	19	Method and apparatus for computer program usage	702/186	714/38; 714/39;	R	L	Barritz, Robert
158	US 5499340 A	19960312	15	Method and apparatus for	714/47				Barritz, Robert

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TITLE: Point-service system in
online shopping mall

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                              U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS
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PATENTEE-NAME   US-CL

   5117355   May 1992   McCarthy
                        N/A   **N/A**
N/A
  5774870   June 1998   **Storey**
                       705/14   N/A
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                         FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS
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               US-CL
       2-34079   August 1990   JP

       2 274 349   July 1994   GB

       2 306 740   May 1997   GB

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PRIMARY-EXAMINER: Peeso; Thomas R.

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ABSTRACT:

    A service system in an online shopping mall
established through a network
realizes an improvement of a service to a customer
by not having to carry a
magnetic card and shortening a time from issuing
points to redeeming points.
To attain the objects of the system, a points
issuing unit issues points
corresponding to the purchase amount of a customer.
 A points storage device
stores the number of points accumulated by the
customer. A points redeeming
unit reduces a purchase amount of the customer as
points to be redeemed. A
points issue ratio and a points redeeming ratio can
be set for each shop
forming part of the online shopping mall.

30 Claims, 19 Drawing figures

Exemplary Claim Number: 1

Number of Drawing Sheets: 19

US-PAT-NO: 5937391

DOCUMENT-IDENTIFIER: US 5937391 A

TITLE: Point-service system in
online shopping mall

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Brief Summary Text - BSTX (8):
   Recently, customers buy goods not only in shops
but also through network
services using telephones, personal computers, etc.
Furthermore, goods can be
displayed through a network, for example, on a
customer terminal connected to,
for example, the Internet, so that a customer can
do shopping through the
terminal. When goods in a plurality of shops are
displayed on the screen, the
shopping mall formed of such shops is referred to
as an online shopping mall.
In such **online shopping malls, no points services
have been provided for a
purchase in a shop**.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (11):
   However, in the point-service system using such
a magnetic card, the
customer has the problem that he or she has to
necessarily show the magnetic
card when he or she buy goods. Furthermore, the
counting adjustment between a
**points issuing shop and a points redeeming shop is
performed in a nighttime
batch process through the host center, even if the**

accumulation result of the
service points is recorded on the magnetic card.
Therefore, the points record
is not practically updated before the day after the
shopping. Accordingly, it
is inconvenient when exchanging the points for an
awarding gift, and it takes a
long time to adjust the records between a points
issuing or award shop and a
points redeeming shop.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (13):
    The present invention aims at realizing a
point-service system in an online
shopping mall established through a network to
solve the above described
problems by, for example, eliminating the necessity
for a customer to carry his
or her own magnetic card, improving the quality of
the service for customers by
shortening the time required from the issuance of
points to the redemption of
the points. Furthermore, the present invention
aims at activating sales in the
online shopping mall, improving the quality of the
services for customers, and
realizing an attractive **online shopping mall**
crowded with customers by, for
example, altering the points issue ratio or the
points redeeming ratio at each
shop or in a specific season.

Brief Summary Text - BSTX (18):
    When a customer decides to buy goods through a
home page of an **online**
shopping mall according to the present invention,
the number of effective
accumulated points of the customer issued by a
number of shops to the customer

is displayed on the customers terminal by referring to the data of each shop
forming part of the online shopping mall. If the customer selects a shop on
the display screen and clicks a shopping button, then an order input screen is
displayed and the customer inputs order data on the order input screen. Then,
the customer clicks the order button, and the point-service system linked to
the Web server of the online shopping mall is activated to issue points or
redeems points at the instruction of the customer when he or she inputs an
order.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (8):
    When each shop joins the **online shopping mall, it is displayed on the home page of the online shopping** mall that each shop can be provided with a
point-service.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (13):
    FIG. 2 shows an example of the configuration of the network for realizing a
point-service system in an online shopping mall 10 according to the present
invention. In FIG. 2, a plurality of servers 11, 12, and 13 form a network,
for example, the Internet. For example, the server 11, that is, a Web server,
provides the online shopping mall 10. A server file 14 for storing a **points management table and a shop management table, to be described later, for storing the points data and shop data in the point-service** system, is connected
to the server 11. For example, the server 12 is

connected to a conventional
online shopping mall through a network. Customers
d, e, and f use the server
12, and can access the conventional online shopping
mall or the online shopping
mall 10 having the point-service system according
to the present invention.
The **online shopping mall 10 is assumed to comprise
the shops** A, B, and C. In
this example, the point-service system is described
by referring to an example
in which the shops do not have their own servers.
However, the shops can also
have their own servers, and can simultaneously
enter another online shopping
mall.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (14):
    FIG. 3 is a block diagram showing the
configuration of the system of an
online shopping mall for realizing the present
invention through a network.   In
FIG. 3, the online shopping mall comprises a Web
server program 15 in the
Internet; a database 16, corresponding to the
server file 14 shown in FIG. 2,
for storing data of a **points management table, a
shop management table, etc.,
to be described later; and a common gateway
interface (CGI) program** 17 as an
interface program between the Web server program 15
and the database 16.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (17):
    FIG. 4 is a block diagram showing the
configuration of the point-service
system realized in the online shopping mall. In
FIG. 4, a point-service system
20 comprises a server file 21 for storing a points

management table for storing
the number of points of a customer of an **online
shopping mall for each**
customer, each time points are issued to the
customer, a shop management table
for storing a points issue ratio and a points
redeeming ratio for each shop
forming part of the online shopping mall, etc.; a
points issuing process
performing unit 22 for issuing points each time a
customer buys goods; a points
redeeming process performing unit 23 for redeeming
points for a customer at the
request from the customer, and reducing the
purchase amount for the customer;
and a patrol process performing unit 24 for
monitoring, for example, the term
of the points assigned to the customer and
notifying a customer by mail when
the term of his or her points is close to
expiration.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (22):
    2.   the Web server program 15 (FIG. 3) in the
mall server transmits as HTTP
data (HTML file) the screen data of the **online
shopping mall to show the data**
of each shop in the online shopping mall, the
number of points issued by each
shop to the customer, etc. in response to the
request, whereas the customer
displays the data on the screen based on the
received HTTP data,

Detailed Description Text - DETX (34):
    FIG. 8 shows an example of the points management
table. As shown in FIG. 8,
the table stores the number of points for each
customer of the **online shopping**

mall, for each shop which provides a point-service.
That is, each time points
are issued, the issue date (purchase date),
effective term, number of points,
issuing shop (where the customer buys the goods),
and the value of the
effective flag are stored. If the effective flag
is set to 0, it indicates
that the goods have been purchased and the charge
has not been paid yet, that
is, the charge is to be paid later, for example, on
credit, transfer from the
account of the customer, transfer to the account of
the shop, etc., as
described later.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (44):
    FIG. 11 shows a shopping input screen displayed
after a customer optionally
selects a shop on the screen shown in FIG. 6. FIG.
12 shows the HTTP data for
use in displaying an input screen. The HTTP data
of the input screen contains
the customer ID input by the customer on the
initial screen of an **online**
shopping mall and the identification information
about the shops. That is,
<FORM METHOD=POST
ACTION=http://www.mall.aaa.co.jp/cgi-bin/program-a&
shown in FIG. 12 indicates that the customer
requests the server
www.mall.aaa.co.jp to execute program-a after the
data is input on the input
screen. Furthermore, <INPUT
TYPE="hidden"NAME="personal-ID" CHECKED
VALUE="aaa0001"> defines an object to be
transmitted as a parameter when
program-a is executed at the request. That is, it
is defined that the data
personal-ID=aaa0001 (indicating that the customer

ID is aaa0001) is to be
transmitted. The `INPUT TYPE="hidden" indicates
that the data is not
displayed. Similarly, <INPUT TYPE="hidden"
NAME="store-ID" CHECKED
VALUE="SPACE DEVELOPMENT"> defines an object to
be transmitted as a
parameter when program-a is executed at the
request. That is, it is defined
that the data store-ID=SPACE DEVELOPMENT
(indicating that the name of the shop
is space development) is to be transmitted. The
`INPUT TYPE="hidden" indicates
that the data is not displayed.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (49):
    When it is determined in step S20 that the shop
provides a point-service, it
is determined in step S21 whether or not the
customer requests a redemption
using the accumulated points, and whether or not
the number of the accumulated
points has reached the minimum value for a
redemption. Unless both of these
conditions are satisfied, no redemption is made.
When no redemption is made,
after the purchase amount is defined as the payment
amount in step S22, the
number of points is computed in step S23. That is,
the number of the points
corresponding to the purchase amount is computed at
a points issue ratio of the
corresponding shop. The minimum value of the
points for a redemption can be
either commonly defined within an **online shopping
mall or individually set by
each shop**.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (63):

FIG. 19 shows an example practically showing the point-service system in an
online shopping mall according to the present invention as the configuration of
the system in a computer environment. FIG. 19 shows the point-service system
as a summary of FIGS. 2 through 4, illustrating the configuration of a WWW
server 30, a network 31, a plurality of WWW browsers 32, and a database 33.
The WWW server 30 comprises an HTTP server 34 for performing a process based on
the above described HTTP protocol, a CGI program 35 for performing the
processes of a **points issuing process performing unit, a points redeeming**
process performing unit, and a patrol process performing unit, and a database
management system (DBMS) 36.· The database 33 stores a points management table,
a shop management table, an adjustment redeeming points storage table, etc.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (64):
    Clicking the mouse of a remote shop which is displayed in the home page of
an **online shopping mall, but is not entered in the online shopping mall, can**
access the home page of the shop. In this case, the purchase information is
simultaneously input to the database linked to the home page of the **online**
shopping mall and the database linked to the home page of the shop. If the
shop enters the **online shopping mall, the purchase information stored in the**
database linked to the home page of the shop is
also transmitted to the
database linked to the home page of the online shopping mall using the existing

network transfer command. In this case, the customer can access the home page
of the shop from the home page of the <u>online shopping mall, enter a request to
receive a point-service from the online shopping mall each time the customer
buys goods in the shop,</u> and then use the point-service system even if the
customer buys goods directly through the home page of the shop. Furthermore,
each shop can easily provide a customer with the latest goods in the shop by
constantly updating the database linked to the home page.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (67):
    As described above, the merits to the customers of the point-service system
of an <u>online shopping mall according to the present invention are that it is
very convenient for a customer to buy goods through a network without a
transportation fee to the shops,</u> various services such as immediate redemption
by points when the customer buys goods are provided, no cards are required when
buying goods, the current number of the points can be easily computed, services
can be improved for the customers through competition among the shops in the
online shopping mall, etc.

Detailed Description Text - DETX (68):
    The merits to the shops in the <u>online shopping mall is that the sales amount
can be increased by inviting a number of customers to the online shopping mall,
it is not necessary for the shop in the online shopping mall to preliminarily</u>

buy points, the shops do not have to issue any
cards, each shop can provide a
customer with their own and attractive services,
thereby serving to further
develop the online shopping mall.

Claims Text - CLTX (39):
   inter-shop redeeming points adjusting means for
adjusting redeeming points
among a plurality of shops forming part of the
online shopping mall based on a
number of redeeming points, a name of the specific
shop, and names of other
shops, for points issued by the other shops in the
redeeming points used by
said points redeeming means when a customer buys
goods at the specific shop.

Claims Text - CLTX (41):
   an adjustment redeeming points storage table for
storing, for each shop
forming part of the **online shopping mall, a number**
of points X issued by the
specific shop and used for a redemption at another
shop, and a number of points
Y used for a redemption at a specific shop but
issued by other shops, wherein

Claims Text - CLTX (46):
   online shopping mall display control means for
controlling display for each
customer, when a customer is buying goods in the
online shopping mall, in such
a way that data of each shop forming part of the
online shopping mall is
displayed with a number of points unused for a
redemption within points issued
to each customer by a shop which provides a

point-service in the online
shopping mall.

Claims Text - CLTX (48):
said **online shopping mall display control means
controls the display of the
data of each shop** forming part of the **online
shopping mall in order from a shop**
having a largest number of points unused for a
redemption.

Claims Text - CLTX (50):
**online shopping mall display control means for
controlling display, when the
customer is buying goods in the online shopping
mall, of data of each shop**
forming part of the **online shopping mall in a
format clearly indicating whether
or not each shop** provides a point-service.